

PREVENTIVE SERVICES/NON-CA/N REFERRALS

For nearly a decade, the Division has provided a service for responding to calls from mandated reporters (as identified in 210.115 RSMo.) that do not rise to the level of a child abuse/neglect report. All calls from mandated reporters to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline Unit with concerns regarding a family, but with no specific incident of abuse or neglect, are accepted as Mandated Reporter Referrals. This service provides direct local response to mandated reporters. When receiving a Mandated Reporter Referral, Children's Division staff in the local county offices contact the mandated reporter within three working days to discuss appropriate community resources and provide referrals appropriate for the needs of the family. The family may then be contacted either by the Children's Division or the reporter to assist the family by making the appropriate referrals and to obtain any additional information to assess the needs of the family. It may be determined, after gathering more information, that intervention by the Children's Division is appropriate.

The Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline Unit accept approximately half of all calls received as child abuse and neglect reports. A majority of the calls that do not fit the criteria for a child abuse or neglect report, are taken as either Mandated Reporter Referrals, Non-Caretaker Referrals, Newborn Crisis Assessment Referrals, Preventive Services Referrals and Non-Child Abuse and Neglect (CA/N) Fatalities. Non-Caretaker Referrals are taken when the alleged perpetrator does not have care, custody or control, as defined by statute. Newborn Crisis Assessments are taken in response to hospital personnel reporting concerns regarding newborns and/or mothers, such as testing positive for illicit drugs at birth. Also, these referrals are taken from medical/health care professionals concerning the medical/health care provided to a child up to age one, where no incident of drug exposure is indicated. Preventive Services Referrals are accepted from non-mandated reporters who are concerned about a child who may be in need of community services or support, however, no abuse/neglect criteria is met. Non-CAN Fatality Referrals include reports of death not related to child abuse or neglect, such as an infant born at 23 weeks gestation and their death is deemed to be due to extreme pre-maturity.

The Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline Unit is responsible for electronically transmitting these referrals to the local county office of the child's residence. The local county office evaluates the information and makes the appropriate and necessary follow-up, depending on the nature of the referral. Approximately 23% of the families that the Children's Division actively serves were forwarded for Preventive Services as a result of these referrals.

The goal of preventive services referrals is to identify resources, make the appropriate referrals and determine if direct intervention is required, in hopes of preventing child abuse and neglect from occurring. The Division collaborates

with local community resources such as treatment centers, shelters, food banks and other neighborhood networks to meet the needs of families. These partnerships allow the Division to connect families who have been referred to our agency with non CA/N concerns with appropriate and timely resources to help reduce the likelihood of abuse and neglect.

Listed below are statistics identifying the number of non-CA/N referrals received by the Division for the years 2000 through 2004. The table illustrates an overall increase in referrals of almost 21% for calendar years 2000 to 2004.

Other Non CA/N Referrals

REPORT YEAR	NEWBORN CRISIS ASSESS.	NON-CA/N FATALITY	MANDATED REPORTER	NON-CARETAKER	PREVENTIVE SERVICES	TOTAL
2000	1,274	92*	15,239	1,208	7,706	25,519
2001	1,683	856**	15,278	1,299	9,292	28,408
2002	2,170	948	16,802	1,394	8,668	29,982
2003	1,842	948	18,118	1,543	7,480	30,005
2004	2,221	1,017	16,960	4,325	7,734	32,257

*November 2000, "F" (Non-CA/N Fatality) Reports began.

**August 28, 2000, Senate Bill 757 required all child deaths to be reported.